Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of Petition for waiver of Section 64.402 of the Commission's Rules	)	**WT** 01- 320
By W. Lee McVey, P.E.,	)	
To: Wireless Telecommunications Bureau	)	

COMMENT

The subject Petition for Waiver of Section 64.402 of the Commission's rules should be granted. Please consider the comments and suggestions noted below.

A. Critical Communications by Non Government Public Utilities

The need for prompt, dependable emergency and urgent communications following disasters in metropolitan areas was once again demonstrated with the events of September 11, 2001 in New York and Washington, D.C. PAS capability should be extended not just to government

users, but to electric and gas utilities as well. The inability of CMRS systems to handle all potential emergency call traffic has occurred repeatedly in disasters since the early days of CMRS system installation. From my own experience as a former electric utility manager during the aftermath of the San Francisco Bay Area Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, CMRS calls could not be dependably placed for at least one to two hours after the event, resulting in delays in damage assessment, and system re-configuration to protect public health and safety.

B. Need for Immediate Availability of PAS

PAS should be enabled within minutes following major disasters. A delay of up to one hour, as proposed would delay critical, first-on-scene communications. A means to activate PAS should be achievable within minutes of emergency agency request and be initiated from multiple remote locations to ensure activation occurs in the event of single site damage. Activation of PAS should not be the responsibility of a single, national agency, but delegated to local and state agencies so as to ensure quick activation as needed on a local or regional basis.

C. Out of Area Access to Wireline System

In times of crisis, even with a cellular PAS in place, local wireline carrier switches are often over utilized and unavailable for hours or longer. Field-deployable mobile telephone banks using earth-satellite-earth multichannel, multiplex capability should be available to provide access to the national wireline telephone system from a distant location. Such a field-deployable, mobile system would ensure the ability to communicate reliably outside of damaged areas. Mobile units

could be stationed at emergency service agencies in larger metropolitan areas for quick deployment as needed.

Respectfully Submitted,

(electronically)

W. Lee McVey, P.E.
PG 1219879
1301 86th Court, NW
Bradenton, FL. 34209-9309
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